

## *Van Meter News*

### STATE OF THE CITY—2013 REVIEW

Positioning Van Meter for success is what 2013 was all about. The city spent a great deal of time, energy, and treasure on getting organized and prepared for a growing workload which is a positive situation for us to be in and we couldn't be more excited.

Early this year our jointly commissioned water quality study with the City of DeSoto concluded that a common water plant would yield modest savings in capital expenses but would be cost prohibitive in the long-run particularly as anticipated growth may require transmission mains between the communities to be upgraded. With that information, the City Councils in both communities have decided to press forward with the development of separate water treatment facilities. Van Meter is moving toward better drinking water. The City Council awarded a contract for engineering services to Veenstra and Kimm to design a water treatment plant. This project is an important community need and will certainly help our economic development efforts. Simply improving water quality for the sake of delivering our existing customers a better product is something for which the City Council has expressed support. Actually building the water plant will be financially difficult and significantly higher water rates are anticipated. Nonetheless, the decision to design a water plant represents more progress on a city issue than has ever been accomplished despite 30 or

more years of debate and discussion.

The City Council also advanced the site certification project which is a program organized by the State of Iowa to verify and help market shovel-ready sites for large economic development projects. In partnership with the Greater Dallas County Development Alliance we worked to make the southeast corner of town shovel-ready for a data center project similar to the Facebook project that landed in Altoona. The project has been intensely detailed and the due diligence that we have completed has been comprehensive. We completed the annexation and rezoning of 300 acres with another 100 acres pending annexation. Environmental site assessments, wetlands delineations, endangered species inventories, archeological surveys, geotechnical analyses, infrastructure extension designs, have been completed and a \$489K grant for new street construction has been secured. At this time we are anticipating receiving our certification early in 2014 and expect to be one of, if not the first community in the State of Iowa with a certified business park.

Ten years ago the City and the School District entered into an agreement to share local option sales tax monies for the construction of a recreation complex. Located between the Raccoon River and the railroad tracks to the west of Casey's the facility has now been built and the agreement between the City and the

#### City Information:

E-mail: [info@vanmeteria.gov](mailto:info@vanmeteria.gov)

[www.vanmeteria.gov](http://www.vanmeteria.gov)

#### Elected Officials:

-Allan Adams, Mayor

#### Council Members—

-Kim Sacker,  
Mayor Pro Tem

-Bob Lacy

-Mike Peterson

-Owen Stump

-Beth Tweed

#### City Staff:

Jake Anderson-  
City Administrator

Liz Thompson-Clerk

David Herman-Public Works

Chad Gillespie—Asst Public Works

Bill Daggett-Police Chief

Jolena Welker-

Library Director

Michelle Boren-Asst Library Director

-City Hall—996-2644

-Library—996-2435

-David Herman—240-9280

-Chad Gillespie—371-9933

-Bill Daggett—202-4150

-Liz Thompson—669-6396

-Jake Anderson—954-6094

Non-Emergency—993-4567

Emergency—911

Post Office—996-2458



# Happy New Year!

Continued from page 1

school is expired. Moving forward the facility will be operated as a City park and will require much attention in 2014. It will be important for all stakeholders to help manage expectations as we manage through the transition.

In anticipation of change The City undertook a number of significant organizational changes. City Hall expanded from operating with two positions, a City Administrator/City Clerk and a Deputy City Clerk, to operating three positions a City Administrator, City Clerk, and a Deputy City Clerk/Rec Coordinator. This change meant that Liz Thompson who has served 9 years as the Deputy City Clerk was promoted to City Clerk in January. Of her promotion City Administrator Jake Anderson said, "Liz has demonstrated steadfastness in a time of rapid change and I have great confidence in her abilities." Then in December the City hired Lisa Tuma as the new Deputy City Clerk/Rec Coordinator. Lisa comes to the City with several years of office experience and a familiarity with the workings of the rec complex that will serve her well.

Further the Police, Fire, and EMS departments were merged into a single department of Public Safety. Under this organizational model, Police Chief Bill Daggett was promoted to Public Safety Director/Police Chief and rather than electing a Fire Chief from among the department's membership as has always been done the position was posted, and after a competitive process based on qualifications, Jon Bruen was appointed Fire Chief for the next two years.

2013 was a big year for the Public Works Department 2013. In addition to the constant maintenance work that the City infrastructure requires, the City undertook three large infrastructure projects. The field management of those projects fell to Public Works Director Dave Herman who did an excellent job of ensuring that the construction was done properly. We constructed sidewalks along Hazel Street. This project was long discussed and a significant improvement in the walkability of our community. We also extended Main Street in support of the American Legion's new reception center and we extended the sewer main south along Richland Road for the benefit of the School District's new athletic complex and a new residential subdivision developed by Knapp Properties.

RAGBRAI passed through town which was a first for the event. We successfully showcased Van Meter. We received countless verbal kudos from riders, volunteers, vendors, and Van Meter Citizens. Common themes of the feedback we received were that we were well organized and in particular the flags lining the entrance to Van Meter were favorite welcome. Financially, the day was also a huge success. The City recovered all of its costs and made a profit of \$3,000 which as intended, was donated to the American Legion. On their own, the American Legion made a profit of \$8,500 after expenses. Taken altogether, the total a single community profit equals \$11,500. Not to mention the untold dollars that were pumped into our local economy by the sales made by our local businesses.

This year we also joined the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. The MPO is a required collaborative effort for regional communities in excess of 500,000 people for the use of federal transportation dollars.

We also launched a new website which incorporates and reinforces our branding concept. It also utilizes a .gov domain name which lends legitimacy and credibility to our status as a local government.

Finally this was an election year. None of the incumbents ran for reelection and with the passing of the New Year Holiday we thank Becca Wiederholt, Richard Booge, and Adam Coyle for their service. We also congratulate Owen Stump, Mike Peterson, and Beth Tweed on their election, and welcome them to the office of City Council.

# VAN METER DEPT OF PUBLIC SAFETY 2013

## LOOKING TOWARD 2014

In 2013 a major change occurred in the police, fire and EMS departments. They were combined under ordinance into a Department of Public Safety with one director. The departments are separate and distinct, however, operate under one administrative umbrella and cross train as feasible to provide the best services possible for the community.

As we have moved through 2013 the focus of the departments has been community service.

In this spirit the Police Department initiated several programs new to the community. These included CODE 411 a program that teaches fifth graders in the classroom to resist drugs, tobacco and bullying. Explorer Post 2525 a public safety post designed to expose teens age 14 to 18 to public safety careers. The creation of a formal reserve officer program by policy and transition of all officers to public safety officers. This provides personnel to the community that are certified and cross trained in law enforcement, firefighting and EMT-B level response. We have worked closely with the Van Meter School District to ensure the safety of your students and provide programming that benefits them. The department has formalized policies and brought new technology onboard, at no additional cost, to better serve the public. The Van Meter Police Department is committed to providing community based policing. As we move into 2014 we will be starting a neighborhood watch program, public safety citizen advisory committee and participating in national night out.

The Fire Department and EMS Division have worked diligently to assist the community by providing Santa at the American Legion, helping to deliver Christmas packages to the needy of our community. Every year they burn barns and other structures to help community resident's clear property of unwanted buildings. New this year was the transition from an elected Fire Chief to an appointed one. When you get a chance congratulate Chief Jon Bruen on his appointment to Fire Chief. The Department applied for a \$141,000 FEMA grant to purchase equipment and train personnel in the hopes of providing very much needed equipment & training at the least expense to community. In 2014 the Fire Department will begin partnering with community organizations such as the Friends of the Library to show movies in the fire station. They will begin a community service day a month to help those in the community who need work done or provide such things as blood pressure clinics.

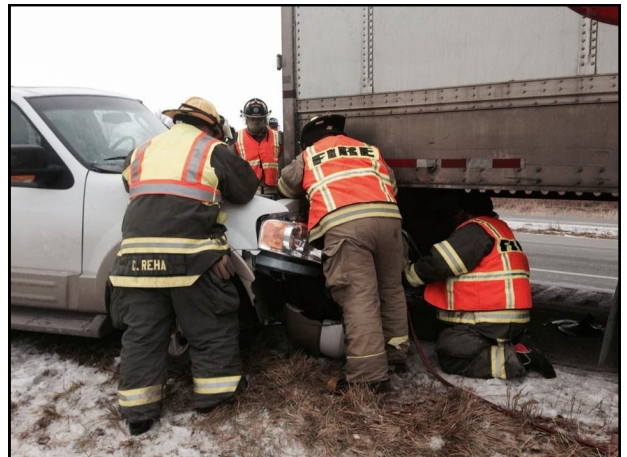
The Public Safety Department as a whole has the goal of providing quality service with an emphasis on serving the community. The men and women of the fire and police services are dedicated volunteers who put in hundreds of hours a year in training and service to the community. I want to thank them for their time and dedication.

As a community member if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me. If you have a desire to serve in our organizations please fill out an application online at [www.vanmeteria.gov](http://www.vanmeteria.gov).

William J. Daggett  
Chief of Police  
(Director of Public Safety)



*Chief Daggett can be  
reached at the following  
numbers:  
cell 515-202-4154  
or Dallas County Dispatch  
at 515-993-4567*







## YOU ARE INVITED

### First Annual Volunteer Appreciation Party

Saturday, January 11, 2014  
6-8 pm  
Veterans Reception Center  
Van Meter, IA

#### Who should attend?

- Anyone who has volunteered their time for and/or at the Veterans Reception Center up through December 31, 2013
- Anyone who wants to find out more about our 2014 "Friends of Post 403" program

Please RSVP to Leslie at 515-996-9166 or [vinc.leslie@gmail.com](mailto:vinc.leslie@gmail.com)

More details to come at  
[www.VeteransReceptionCenter.com](http://www.VeteransReceptionCenter.com)

#### Next Post Breakfast—

January 5, 2014

7:30 -12:30

\$6 Adults

\$4 Children

Free for age 5 and under

#### Thursday Night Meal

5:30p—7:30p

Veterans Reception Center

# AMERICAN LEGION

The Post level of the national American Legion Oratorical Contests was held on December 7, 2013 at the new Post building at 910 Main Street, Van Meter, IA.

The Contest features area high school students presenting speeches they have prepared relating to the U.S. Constitution and its' Amendments.



Contestants are: left to right in the picture -- contestant name and Prepared Oration speech title were:

Carolyn Power

"The Right to Bear Arms"

Ryann Slycord

"Women's Rights"

Emma Skahill

"The Road to Our Republic"

Summer Sobotka

"The National Language"

Hayley Cozad

"Student's Rights as Covered Under the Constitution"

Judges for the Post Contest were:

Randy Hefner

District Court Judge District 5A

Tyler Eason

Assistant County Attorney Story County

Jacki Pleggenkuhle

Educator at Waukee HS; leads 100+ member speech team and District Officer for IA High School Speech Association

Dave Price

Political Director, host of "The Insiders with Dave Price", and weekend anchor at WHO-TV

Greg Hulse

District Court Judge District 5A

The winner of the 2013 Post 403 Oratorical Contest was Emma Skahill. Emma will receive a \$500 scholarship upon graduation as a senior and will also receive another \$200 Post scholarship for participating in Dallas County competition, and another \$300 Post scholarship for participating in American Legion Sixth District Contest to be held on January 19, 2014 at the Baldwin Patterson Post #274 at 2211 E. 42nd Avenue in Des Moines, IA. The other Post 403 contestants also receive scholarships of \$400, \$300, \$200, and \$100. Post 403 considers all five students as winners -- as the students help the Post accomplish one of its' Post goals -- "Provide educational opportunity to our youth so they may better understand the meaning of serving our country and community."

Additional help for the Post Contest was given by community members Marva DeBoer, Sharon Garvey, Elaine Merial, Marilyn Smith, and Dave Tapps and Post members Terry Clark, Toby Cozad, Wayne Dunbar, Keith Gunzenhauser, Mark Kamm, Chuck Smith, Terry Vande Kamp, Gary Wemer, and Post Commander Marsha Whiteaker. The Post Contest was also supported by Van Meter High School education staff of Ann Allen, Deron Durlinger, Adam Lamoureux, and Jessica Rabe.

# CHECK IT OUT— Van Meter Public Library



Email: [jwelker@vanmeteria.gov](mailto:jwelker@vanmeteria.gov) or [mboren@vanmeteria.gov](mailto:mboren@vanmeteria.gov)

Phone (515) 996-2435

**JANUARY:** a time of reflection, beginning anew, snow storms, sledding, no school, fireplaces and making plans for 2014!

First on the agenda is the **WINTER ADULT READING PROGRAM**. You must be 18 or older to participate. This year each time you read, listen to or have someone read to you a book you can put your name on a piece of paper for a drawing at the end of February. We have about 7 businesses that are making up great gift or prize baskets. Each basket will have a value of approximately \$50.00. If you read a book from home, here or even another library your name goes into win. We will have the drawing at the end of February. One prize basket per adult. Not only read because you enjoy it, but because you have a better chance of winning a prize! :)

Last months winner on the Christmas Carol contest was Alma Prouty! Geri Richards came in second. Alma won a \$10.00 gift card to Bakers Square. I hope Alma enjoys pie! I LIKE PIE! Thank you to those who played and took part in answering.

## HERE ARE A FEW NEW READS TO COZY UP TO:

- Death of Riley by Rhys Bowen
- The shoemaker's Wife by Adriana Trigiani
- The Valley of Amazement by Amy Tan
- The All-Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion by Fannie Flag
- Cross My Heart by James Patterson
- The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon by Alexander Smith
- The First Phone Call From Heaven by Mitch Albom
- Never Go Back by Lee Childs
- Loss of Innocence by Richard North Patterson
- Once Upon a Time by Debbie Macomber

## Library Hours

Monday—9a to 5p

Tuesday—3p to 8p

Wednesday—9a to 8p

Thursday—9a to 8p

Friday—9a to 5p

Saturday—9a to Noon

## NEW AUDIO BOOKS ARE:

- I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban
- The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
- Sycamore Row by John Grisham

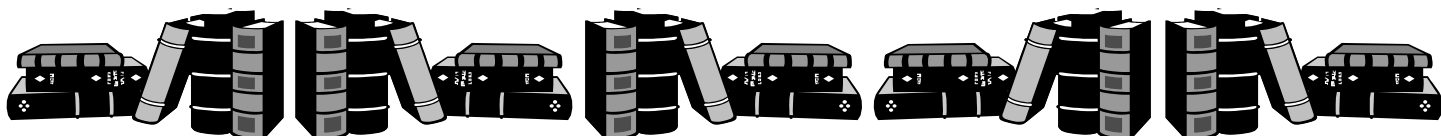
## DVD's:

- Legend of the Guardians
- Dragon Hunters
- Escape From Planet Earth
- Epic
- The Wolverine
- Red 2



# Super Hero

One last very important item: January is **SUPER HERO** month at your library. Jolena and Michelle will be bringing and enjoying comic books with the kids. Please wear your super hero shirts anytime. We will be having fun and food through out the month. So pick a super hero and be one. Jolena has picked Wonder Woman and Michelle has picked Robin! Watch for us flying through the community.



## CITY OF VAN METER

505 Grant Street  
PO Box 160  
Van Meter, IA 50261

Phone: 515-996-2264

Fax: 515-996-2207

Email: [info@vanmeteria.gov](mailto:info@vanmeteria.gov)

### Christmas Tree Disposal 2014—1/3 & 1/9

Christmas Trees will be  
picked up by Waste Con-  
nections on Friday, January 3rd  
and Thursday, January 10th.  
Place the tree in your regu-  
lar pickup location by 7 a.m.  
to ensure that it is removed.

### Recycling Schedule for January 2014

WASTE CONNECTIONS INC.

515-265-7374

Monday, January 13

Monday, January 27



## FUNDRAISER

### Garbage/Recycle Collection



New Year plans include drinking beverages from recyclable containers???  
The Van Meter After Prom students will be collecting empty cans and bottles on  
Saturday, January 9 starting at 9 a.m. to help fund after prom activities.  
They thank you in advance for your donations!

## VAN METER AFTER PROM

### Coming Soon!

### Van Meter Chiropractic Clinic



Dr. Ursula Adkins will be opening **Van Meter Chiropractic Clinic** in early January  
2014. The Clinic will be located at 411 Grant Street next to the post office.

Dr. Ursula Adkins is an Iowa native and a recent graduate of Palmer College of Chi-  
ropractic in Davenport. She is looking forward to joining the community of Van Me-  
ter and bringing wellness to you and your family.

## New Business!

### MAIL DELIVERY INFO

Now that winter is here the Van Meter Postmaster wants to remind customers that in  
order to receive mail delivery it is necessary to keep the full approach and exits to your  
mailbox, fifteen feet on either side, free of snow, trash cans and vehicles. Customers in  
Crestview Estates that receive their mail in NDCBU's are asked to be good neighbors  
and help keep the unit where you receive your mail free of snow and ice as many of the  
units stand on vacant lots at this time. Your cooperation in the matter  
is sincerely appreciated. Please contact the Post Office with any ques-  
tions or concerns, 996-2458. Thank you from your Postmaster  
and Mail Carriers!



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